

we are in no way forgetting or diminishing the contribution made by all who have faithfully served our nation as members of its armed forces.

Because we are honoring those whose names will be in the Hall of Heroes, it seems fitting to ask, "What is a hero?" The first time someone called me a hero, my reaction was, "I am no hero. I just did my duty." As I have thought about it, however, maybe that is part of what a hero is. It is someone who puts duty above self—someone who exhibits selfless dedication to a noble cause.

Another characteristic of a hero is courage. But, what is courage? British author C.K. Chesterton aptly described courage as follows:

"Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die. 'He that will lose his life, the same shall save it,' is not a piece of mysticism for saints and heroes. It might be printed in . . . a drill book. The paradox is the whole principle of courage. . . . A soldier surrounded by enemies, if he is to cut his way out, needs to combine a strong desire for living with a strange carelessness about dying. He must not merely cling to life, for then he will be a coward, and will not escape. He must not merely wait for death, for then he will be a suicide, and will not escape. He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water and yet drink death like wine.

In combat, you have no future. You have no past. You have only the present. To survive, you must consider yourself already dead, and then fight with all that is in you to stay alive, and to keep alive those who are fighting alongside you.

I first learned this truism not long after I started flying as a crew chief on a Huey gunship. As a crew chief, my job was to maintain the helicopter and to be a door gunner when we were flying. One afternoon, as we were returning from a mission, I moved from my normal position literally two seconds before a 51-caliber round tore through my helicopter. Had I not moved, it would have hit me right in the Adam's apple, and would have taken my head off. There was no reason for me to have moved, other than the intervention of God.

I pondered that event for a little while. Before then, being killed in combat had been an abstract possibility. I now realized that as long as I was flying in gunships, being killed was a distinct probability. Perhaps what was most disconcerting was that the bullet came without any warning. It was like a bolt out of the blue. We were not even in a place where we were expecting enemy fire. I realized that on any given day, I could be killed by one bullet coming without warning out of nowhere. I concluded that I could either worry about dying and get ulcers, or simply choose not to worry about it. I chose the latter course. From that day on, I simply considered myself already dead. Those who have accepted their death need not fear it.

Certainly, those who willingly risk their lives in combat while fighting for our country are heroes. The people we are honoring today, however, did more than merely risk their lives. The military does not award medals for valor simply for risking one's life. That is expected in combat. I was on a Huey gunship during most of my two years in Vietnam. Our job was to find the enemy and engage them. We did not have any high-tech equipment to help us locate the enemy. Our most sophisticated electronics were our two-way radios. To find the enemy, we simply tried to be an attractive target so that they would shoot at us. We would fly as low as we could, sometimes only a few feet above the ground, over or near places where the enemy

may be hiding, trying to draw their fire. Once the enemy opened fire, we would know where they were and could take them on. Having the enemy shoot at us was simply part of our job; it was all in a day's work. That is the same for anyone who serves in combat.

Those we are honoring today did not merely risk their lives in combat. They went far above and beyond the call of duty, putting then lives at extraordinary risk. They may have done so to rescue wounded or trapped comrades, or to accomplish the mission. Firefights are decided, battles are won, and victory is gained because of soldiers like these—who put themselves at extraordinary risk to save others, to accomplish the mission, and to defeat the enemies of freedom.

One of God's blessings upon this nation has been that throughout her history, in times of great trials, ordinary people have come forward and done extraordinary deeds. Today, we are honoring some of those people. On behalf of my fellow Americans, I thank them and I salute them.

#### TRIBUTE TO A GOOD FRIEND AND LOYAL PUBLIC SERVANT, JAMES J. MANCINI

#### HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 19, 2003*

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to one of my greatest friends and one of Ocean County's finest, Ocean County Freeholder and Long Beach Township Mayor James J. Mancini.

Upon hearing of his passing, I was deeply saddened, given the tremendous impact he had on my life and those he served in Ocean County. To say that Jim will be missed is an understatement; he touched the lives of so many around him and spent every day of his life helping others.

A champion for seniors and veterans, Mayor Mancini's dedication to his community and his genuine interest in reaching out to others was unparalleled. As one of Ocean County's best advocates for seniors, his commitment to providing retirees with quality health care was unwavering. Every chance he had, Jim worked to make life better for every senior who lived in Ocean County.

Additionally, as a Veteran of World War II, Mayor Mancini made it his top priority to work on behalf of our local veterans. In fact, as a result of his efforts, services to tens of thousands of veterans were increased and improved.

Many of us from south Jersey remember the two "nor'easter" storms in the early 1990's that severely damaged the beaches of Long Beach Island. As a result of the threat to property and lives, Mayor Mancini made it his mission to guarantee these beaches would be rebuilt.

After ten years of work—including securing 3 million federal dollars, 8 years of study and design, and overcoming hurdles that prevented new beach replenishment projects from starting—just yesterday we found out that Jim's long-sought after funding to begin replenishing Long Beach Island's beaches came to fruition. This funding was included in the House-passed final version of the 2004 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

How ironic. After more than a decade, the project was approved by the House of Representatives on the same day as Mayor Mancini's passing. Without his persistence, it likely would not have happened.

Beginning from his election as Mayor of Long Beach Township in 1964 to his serving as a State Assemblyman in the 1970s to his becoming an Ocean County Freeholder in the 1980's, Mayor Mancini lived his life to serve and help others, and his legacy will live on for many years to come.

Throughout my life, I have met few people as compassionate and as selfless as Jim Mancini; it was an honor and privilege to be his friend. I extend my deepest sympathies to Madeline Mancini and the rest of their family, and know we will remember this caring friend, wonderful father and grandfather, admired leader, and dedicated public servant for the rest of our lives.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO DON SCHNEIDER

#### HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 19, 2003*

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I pay tribute to Retired Lieutenant Colonel Don Schneider from Grand Junction, Colorado. Don has dedicated his life to the betterment of his family, country and community, and I am proud to call his contributions to the attention of this body of Congress here today.

Don moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1959. Between 1959 and 1964, he accomplished a great deal. He attended the Air Force Academy, completed Airborne Jump School, Officer Training School, and earned a degree from the University of Denver, eventually working with Martin-Marietta on the Titan II missile program. In addition, Don met and married his wife Judy and had three wonderful children during this period.

After his training, Don was transferred to Tennessee, where he served as a navigator and instructor at Stewart Air Force Base. While stationed in Tennessee, Don acquired 2000 hours of flying time on deployments worldwide. Between 1970 and 1971, Don flew 180 combat missions in the Vietnam conflict. In a time of war, Don's patriotism and valor shone through, proving him a true hero. At war's end, Don's honorable service had earned him numerous decorations, including the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Meritorious Service Medal.

Following the war, Don was stationed in Myrtle Beach, where he was a pilot, safety officer, and instructor who trained a number of National Guard units, including the Colorado Air Squadron stationed at Colorado's Buckley Air Force Base. Don completed his service to the United States Air Force in 1985. After entering the private sector for some time, Don and his family moved to Grand Junction in 1998. In Grand Junction, Don has continued his service to his country. He currently serves as the President of the Western Colorado Chapter of Military Officers, and is an active member of the Order of the Dandelions, the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.